

Date: November 21, 2014

To: Individuals and Organizations Interested in Participating
in the Private School Choice Programs (PSCP)

From: Latoya Holiday, Consultant
Private School Choice Programs

Re: PSCP 2015-16 Registration Forms and Information

Enclosed please find the following forms and information detailing the requirements for a private school to participate in the PSCP in the 2015-16 school year. All of the forms and information can also be downloaded from http://sms.dpi.wi.gov/sms_pscp_registration.

- Notice of School's Intent to Participate in the PSCP for the 2015-16 School Year
- Voluntary Agreement for DPI Approval of School's Random Selection Plan
- Letter and Attachments Regarding Student Rights in the PSCP
- Auditor Fee Form
- Student Application Designee Authorization Form
- School Registration Checklist
- Initial Assurances Form **(New Schools Only)**
- Registration Information for Required Training **(New Schools Only)**

Additional information also enclosed:

- Information on Hours of Instruction
- Information on the New School Budget
- Information on PSCP Optional Open Application Periods
- Information on Accreditation Requirements
- Information on Insurance Requirements
- PSCP Intent to Offer Summer School Form

Additional explanation regarding each of these documents follows. **Please note all of the enclosed forms are due to DPI by February 2, 2015 unless otherwise noted. The documents must be received at the DPI no later than 4:30 p.m. on February 2, 2015.** If a school misses this deadline the school will not be eligible to participate in the PSCP during the 2015-16 school year. Therefore, it is in the school's best interest to submit these required forms as soon as possible so that any errors or questions can be resolved well in advance of the February 2, 2015 deadline.

Notice of School's Intent to Participate: The school's Notice of Intent to Participate (signed and dated by the school's choice administrator) must arrive at the DPI no later than 4:30 p.m. on February 2, 2015, for the school to participate in the PSCP for the 2015-16 school year. Please read through and ensure you understand the entire form before signing. By signing the form, you agree that compliance with program requirements constitutes a condition of receipt of funds and that in the event of failure to comply, your school's participation in the program can be terminated and/or PSCP payments withheld.

Please note the administrator signing the Notice of Intent to Participate must be the sole owner of the school or appointed by the operating organization of the school and have at least a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution of higher education.

State law requires schools to ensure that an owner, officer, director, trustee, administrator, administrator's designee or an individual with administrative, financial or pupil health and safety responsibilities, whether compensated or uncompensated, is not a disqualified person as defined under Wis. Stat. §§119.23(1)(ag) or 118.60(1)(ag). A disqualified person is defined as a person who had a controlling ownership interest in, or was an officer, director or trustee of a private school barred or terminated from the program, or was the administrator of a private school, a person identified as an administrative designee, or an individual responsible for the activity that resulted in an order being issued barring or terminating a private school from participation in the program. If a school retains a disqualified person, the school may be terminated from the program.

Random Selection Plan: Each private school that intends to participate in the PSCP shall submit its random selection plan and have the plan approved by the state superintendent no later than 4:30 p.m. on February 2, 2015. The approved random selection plan would then be permanently in effect until such time as the statutes or rules are changed regarding random selection, or the school wished to make changes to its approved plan. The state superintendent would then review and approve those changes before a school could continue in the program.

The attached document entitled "Agreement on Random Selection Process for Admissions into the Private School Choice Programs" is a description of the procedures that a school's random selection plan must follow to be approved by the state superintendent. If a school **voluntarily** agrees to sign this document stating that the school will follow these rules for randomly selecting pupils for the PSCP, the return of the signed original to DPI will signify the state superintendent's approval of the school's plan. If a school does not sign this document and, instead, wishes to construct its own random selection plan to apply beginning with the 2015-16 school year, the school may do so. If the school wishes to construct its own random selection plan it must be submitted to the DPI and approved by the state superintendent. DPI staff will work with the school on any edits to its plan that may be necessary to receive departmental approval of the plan. These edits must be completed prior to February 2, 2015.

Student Rights Letter: This letter contains a list of student rights that formerly appeared in the Administrative Code PI 35. It was agreed to at the Legislature's Joint Committee on Administrative Rules meeting held July 30, 1998, that in exchange for the Department's removal of the student rights list from the administrative rules, school administrators and principals would sign the enclosed letter of acknowledgement. This letter must be received at DPI no later than 4:30 p.m. on February 2, 2015.

Auditor Fee Form: Under 2009 Act 28, private schools intending to participate in the PSCP must no later than 4:30 p.m. on February 2, 2015, pay to the department a nonrefundable fee of **\$740** to fund the cost of one auditor position. Payment of the nonrefundable fee must be made in the form of a cashier's check payable to the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. Other forms of payment will not be accepted. **No refunds of the fee will be made, regardless of whether or not the school participates in the PSCP.**

Student Application Designee Authorization Form: This form shall be completed and submitted to the DPI when a school's choice administrator wishes to designate one or more individuals to assist in processing choice pupil applications. This form must be on file at DPI before an individual can begin processing choice student applications. The choice administrator of schools that are new to the PSCP must submit this form if he/she wishes to designate individuals to assist him/her. Choice administrators of schools that are continuing in the PSCP are not required to submit this form unless there are changes or updates.

School Registration Checklist: This checklist was created to assist you in making sure all the registration forms are completed correctly. After completing the registration forms, please complete the checklist. The completed checklist should be submitted to DPI along with all of the registration forms no later than 4:30 p.m. on February 2, 2015.

Initial Assurance Form (New Schools Only): The Initial Assurance form must be completed by schools new to the program and is due to the department on **May 1, 2015**, along with the required attachments relating to employee compensation documents and financial accounting systems. Please note that the choice administrator must sign at the end of the form, attesting to the school's agreement to comply with all the requirements of Administrative Code PI 35 including timely submission of the following documents: (1) the school's certificate of insurance showing the school has the required insurance coverage and fidelity bond by August 1, 2015; (2) the school's validated application for its certificate of occupancy and application to the Board of Zoning Appeals, if required, by May 1, 2015; and (3) the school's final valid certificate of occupancy by August 1, 2015.

This form must be properly notarized. Notary Publics are available at schools, banks, and post offices. Other options include a clerk or deputy clerk of a court of record, a court commissioner, a register or deputy register of deeds, a judge, or a county or deputy county clerk. False statements or failure to file this form in a timely manner may result in a school being barred from participating in the PSCP.

PSCP Training Requirements (New Schools Only): New schools are required to participate in fiscal management training in order to be eligible to participate in the choice programs. The school's choice administrator is required to attend two full-day training workshops in Madison. Day One of the workshop will cover general program requirements, testing, student eligibility, student applications and using the Online Application System. Day Two of the workshop will cover fiscal management and how to complete the choice program new schools budget. Attendance for the entire workshop each day is required for choice administrators. Schools may register for the workshops online at http://sms.dpi.wi.gov/new_school_training.

Please be sure to register for both days of training. Administrators of new schools that intend to register for both the Milwaukee **and** the Racine/Statewide program will be required to attend an additional half-day of training. Participants are strongly encouraged to register early because each session has limited space.

When deciding who will attend the training workshops it is strongly advised that new schools send more than one representative who might qualify to serve as the school's choice administrator. New schools are not permitted to change who will serve as the choice administrator during their first year in the program unless the individual has attended all required training workshops.

Hours of Instruction: PSCP schools must provide 1,050 hours of direct pupil instruction in grades 1 to 6 and 1,137 hours of direct pupil instruction in grades 7-12. Hours can include recess and time for pupils to transfer between classes but do not include lunch periods. Annually each private school participating in the PSCP must complete the Hours of Instruction report showing that the school's scheduled hours of instruction meet these minimum requirements. The Hours of Instruction report and examples of how to complete the report can be found on the following webpage: http://sms.dpi.wi.gov/choice_reports. Once completed, the school must sign and submit a copy of the Hours of Instruction report to the DPI. New schools must submit the Hours of Instruction report no later than **February 2, 2015**. Continuing schools must submit the Hours of Instruction report by **May 1, 2015**.

Budget and Cash Flow Form (New Schools Only): All new schools are required to submit the PSCP budget and cash flow form by **May 1, 2015**. New schools must use the 2015-2016 Excel version of this report that will be posted to the following webpage http://sms.dpi.wi.gov/sms_finrpt. Once the form has been completed in Excel the school must print a copy and have school's choice administrator that attended the required trainings sign the form. The signed report can either be mailed the DPI or scanned and emailed as a PDF document to dpichoiceauditreports@dpi.wi.gov. The completed budget form is due by May 1, 2015. Continuing schools are encouraged to use this form for planning and budget purposes but are not required to send the budget to the DPI unless specifically requested to do so.

Accreditation Requirements: Under Wis. Stat. §§119.23(2)(a)7b., and 118.60 (2)(a)7b., new schools interested in participating in the PSCP in the 2015-16 school year must be preaccredited by Wisconsin North Central Association, the Wisconsin Religious and Independent Schools Accreditation, the Independent Schools Association of the Central States, Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod School Accreditation, National Lutheran School Accreditation, or the Archdiocese or diocese in which the school is located by August 1, 2015. If a school new to the PSCP is fully accredited by the Wisconsin North Central Association, the Wisconsin Religious and Independent Schools Accreditation, the Independent Schools Association of the Central States, Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod School Accreditation, National Lutheran School Accreditation, Wisconsin Association of Christian Schools, the Archdiocese or diocese in which the school is located or by any other organization recognized by the National Council for Private School Accreditation, the school is not required to be preaccredited.

All schools participating in the PSCP are required to achieve full accreditation by the Wisconsin North Central Association, the Wisconsin Religious and Independent Schools Accreditation, the Independent Schools Association of the Central States, Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod School Accreditation, National Lutheran School Accreditation, Wisconsin Association of Christian Schools, the Archdiocese or diocese in which the school is located or by any other organization recognized by the National Council for Private School Accreditation. Schools new to the PSCP for the 2015-16 school year must be fully accredited by December 31, 2018 and must have an accepted application for accreditation by **December 31, 2015**. The enclosed document lists the contact information for the above mentioned accrediting organizations.

Schools participating in the PSCP that are fully accredited are required to maintain accreditation and as such must provide to DPI annually by January 15, evidence demonstrating that the school remains accredited for the current school year. The law requires that schools include as evidence of accreditation a letter prepared by one of the statutorily approved accrediting agencies that confirms that the school is accredited by that agency for the current school year.

Insurance Requirements: Under Administrative Rule PI 35, all schools are required to continuously maintain minimum levels of insurance coverage. The enclosed insurance document lists those coverage requirements. New schools must have the required insurance coverage in effect by August 1, 2015. If the school is offering choice summer school, the coverage must be in effect by May 1, 2015.

Open Application Periods Information: This two-sided document provides additional information on the rules and timelines related to open application periods. Open application periods are the only times schools may accept PSCP student applications. Please read through this information carefully as you decide which of the open application periods your school will participate in during the 2015-16 school year. Remember that after February 2, 2015, schools cannot amend their open application periods. Please note that the available open application periods differ for the Milwaukee/Racine programs and the Statewide program.

Summer School: PSCP schools that are interested in offering summer school during the summer of 2015 should complete and mail the Summer School Intent Form no later than February 2, 2015. New schools that intend to offer summer school must meet building occupancy, insurance and preaccreditation requirements, if applicable, by May 1, 2015.

If you have questions concerning this material, please contact me as soon as possible [phone: (608) 266-8066, fax: (608) 267-9207, email: latoya.holiday@dpi.wi.gov.] Or, contact Molly Koranda [phone: (608) 266-0523, fax: (608) 267-9207, email: molly.koranda@dpi.wi.gov] or, Patrick Gasper [phone: (608) 266-2853, fax: (608) 267-9207, email: patrick.gasper@dpi.wi.gov.]

Enclosures